

Managing Neighbourhood Complaints

May 2019



Document Information

Title: Managing Neighbourhood Complaints
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Version: 2
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Issue date: 27 May 2019
Review date: 27 May 2021

Revision History

Issue date	Version	Revision description
27 May 2019	2	This policy has been developed as a standalone policy, separated from the general Complaints Policy. This policy outlines how Women's Housing Ltd will respond to complaints lodged by neighbours of WHL managed and/or owned properties.

Contents

Document Information	1
1. Purpose	3
2. Scope	3
3. Definitions	3
4. Communication	3
5. Receiving a complaint	3
6. Complaints Investigation Timelines	3
7. Privacy	4
8. Advocates.....	4
9. Resources	4
10. Relevant Legislation.....	4

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the approach Women's Housing Ltd (WHL) takes in managing complaints received from neighbours of WHL owned and/or managed properties.

WHL's aim is to provide an accessible and responsive complaint resolution system that is timely, fair and equitable.

The essential features of the complaints process will be:

- Provision of information to neighbours about how to lodge a complaint with WHL.
- Fair, speedy and effective resolution of complaints.
- Courteous and positive assistance from WHL staff.
- Protection of privacy and confidentiality.

2. Scope

This policy applies to neighbours of all WHL owned and managed properties.

3. Definitions

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service or policy that is the responsibility of WHL. For example, a neighbour might complain about noise or disruption caused by WHL tenants.

A **complainant** is the person that lodged a complaint about a WHL tenant/s.

4. Communication

All complaints are managed promptly and in a courteous manner. All complainants will be provided with a written response and are encouraged to contact WHL should further incidents arise.

5. Receiving a complaint

Complaints can be lodged with WHL via:

- the website
- email to reception@womenshousing.com.au
- a phone call to the office on 9412 6868 extension 4
- posted mail
- WHL staff at the office

6. Complaints Investigation Timelines

- WHL will contact complainant within 24 hours of notification to obtain further details regarding the complaint lodged.
- If the matter can be resolved immediately, a letter will be sent advising resolution.
- If the matter is not immediately resolved, the matter will be investigated, and a decision made within 30 days.
- Complainants will be advised in writing that a matter is under investigation and will be provided with a point of contact at WHL.

7. Privacy

All information provided by the complainant is confidential and will not be distributed further without consent. In order to resolve a situation, WHL may be required to take the matter to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal. (VCAT). If this is the case, WHL will ask complainants whether they are willing to attend VCAT.

8. Advocates

Complainants can seek support and advice from an external advocacy service. A list of these agencies is provided on the WHL website.

9. Resources

- Complaints Log for Neighbours
- Complaints Form
- Complaints Information Sheet
- Complaints and Appeals Policy

10. Relevant Legislation

- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006
- Housing Act 1983 (including amendments 2007) Commonwealth Privacy (Private Sector) Amendment Act 2000 (Federal Act)
- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victorian State Act)
- Protected Disclosures Act 2012